**Romans Chapter 12**

* Romans 12:1-2, Our dedicated service to God
* Romans 12:3-8, Many members of the body, different functions
* Romans 12:9-13, Love and service
* Romans 12:14-21, Be at peace with all people

# Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

* 1. Urge
     1. παρακαλέω parakaléō, occurs 111 times in the N.T. In the NASB, it is translated as appeal (Matt. 26:53; 2 Cor. 5:20; Philem 9), beg (Acts 24:4), beseech (Mark 1:40), comfort (Matt. 2:18; Acts 20:12), conciliate (1 Cor. 4:13), encourage (Acts 14:22; 16:40; Heb. 3:13), entreat (Matt. 8:31), exhort (Luke 3:18; 1 Cor. 1:10), implore (Matt. 8:5; Luke 7:4; 2 Cor. 12:8), invite (Acts 8:31), plead (Matt. 18:32; Luke 15:28), request (Acts 20:20), urge (Acts 25:2; Rom. 12:1; 15:30; Titus 2:6), etc.
     2. Paul is urging us to make choices that are acceptable to God. But, what we choose to do is by God's mercy.
        1. God works all things after the counsel of his will (Eph. 1:11)
        2. We are created to do good works (Eph. 2:10)
        3. Our faith is granted from Him (Phil. 1:29).
  2. Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice
     1. The word 'present' is aorist, active, infinitive
        1. Aorist - An action completed in the past
        2. Active - An action performed by an individual
        3. Infinitive – Verb form, 'to eat,' 'to walk,' etc.
     2. Paul is urging people to actively present themselves before God
        1. Living
           1. Our constant state. Our lives are gifts from God. What are we doing with them?
        2. Holy
           1. Holiness is a high standard that is based in God (1 Pet. 1:16). We are to seek holiness in our lives.
        3. Sacrifice
           1. Our sacrifices that we make to God and others are a reflection of the sacrifice of Christ.

"We love, because He first loved us," (1 John 4:19).

* + - * 1. We are to pick up our crosses daily and follow after Christ (Luke 9:23).
        2. We are to offer ourselves as a living and holy sacrifice to God, not like the sacrifices of the O.T., which were dead. Our sacrifices are alive because they come from Christ living in us (John 14:23; Eph. 3:17). Therefore, we praise God, worship God, glorify God, speak of God, speak to others about God, etc.
        3. This can mean praying for others, serving others, loving others, etc. It can mean showing compassion and mercy to people, even when they don't deserve it.
  1. Spiritual service of worship
     1. Spiritual
        1. The word ‘spiritual’ is λογικός logikós. It occurs twice in the New Testament: in Rom. 12:1 and 1 Pet. 2:2
           1. 1 Pet. 2:2, "like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."
        2. Logikos implies intelligent, rational discourse
           1. λογίζομαι, logízomai means reason, to reckon, impute, number[[1]](#footnote-1)
           2. λόγιος, lógios means "reason, thought, expression, word."[[2]](#footnote-2)
           3. λογισμός, logismós means "A reckoning, calculation, consideration, reflection."[[3]](#footnote-3)
           4. λόγος, logos means "to speak intelligently. Intelligence, word as the expression of that intelligence, discourse, saying, thing."[[4]](#footnote-4)
        3. Our worship of God is to be intellectual as well as heartfelt. (The next verse expands on this.)
           1. Matt. 22:37, "And He said to him, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'"
        4. Whenever we speak truth (truths are of the mind), we glorify God because all truth comes from God. God is the necessary precondition for all that exists, as well as all facts, actualities, and potentialities.
        5. Therefore, 2+2 = 4 is a moral statement because it is true, and all truths rest in the mind of God, and we ought to believe whatever is true. Therefore, everything that is actual as well as potential can be traced back through time via the causal chain that was begun by God, who is the First Mover.
     2. Worship
        1. λατρεία latreía occurs 5 times in the NT: John 16:2; Rom. 9:4; 12:1; Heb. 9:1, 6
           1. John 16:2, "They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God."
           2. Rom. 9:4, "who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises,"
           3. Rom. 12:1, "…spiritual service of worship."
           4. Heb. 9:1, "Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary."
           5. Heb. 9:6, "Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship."
        2. Contrast with προσκυνέω proskunéō, "used to designate the custom of prostrating oneself before persons and kissing their feet or the hem of their garment, the ground, etc."[[5]](#footnote-5) It is often translated as obeisance, bowing down, etc.
           1. For a deeper look at proskuneo as it relates to the Jehovah's Witness' translation in their NWT, see https://carm.org/jehovahs-witnesses/the-new-world-translation-and-proskuneo-worship

# And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

* 1. Do not be conformed to this world
     1. The fallen world
        1. Has stumbling blocks (Matt. 18:7)
        2. Hates Jesus (John 7:7)
        3. Hates Jesus' disciples (John 15:18; 17:14; 1 John 3:13)
        4. Satan is the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4)
        5. Satan deceives the world (Rev. 12:9)
        6. The whole world lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19).
        7. The world cannot receive the Spirit of truth (John 14:17)
        8. The world loves its own (John 15:19)
        9. The world is a place of sin (John 16:8; 1 Cor. 5:10)
        10. Tribulation is in the world (John 16:33)
        11. The world does not know the Father (John 17:25)
        12. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36)
        13. God will judge the world (Acts 17:31; Rom. 3:6)
        14. Sin entered the world through Adam (Rom. 5:12)
        15. The wisdom of the world is foolishness (1 Cor. 1:20-21; 3:19)
        16. The way of the world is according to the Prince of the Power of the Air (Eph. 2:2)
        17. There are elementary principles of the world (Col. 2:8, 20)
        18. Corruption is in the world (2 Pet. 1:4; 2:20)
        19. In the world, there is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life (1 John 2:16).
        20. The world is passing away (1 John 2:17)
        21. The world does not know who Christians really are because it does not know who Jesus really is (1 John 3:1)
        22. There are many false prophets in the world (1 John 4:1)
        23. The Spirit of antichrist is in the world (1 John 4:4)
        24. Many deceivers are in the world who deny the incarnation of Jesus (2 John 7)
     2. Christians and the world
        1. The saints will judge the world (1 Cor. 6:2)
        2. We are crucified to the world (Gal. 6:14)
        3. Christ came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15)
        4. Friendship with the world is hostility toward God (James 4:4)
        5. Do not love the things of the world (1 John 2:15)
        6. Christians overcome the world by being born of God by faith (1 John 5:4) and believing that Jesus is the son of God (1 John 5:5).
  2. Transformed by the renewing of your mind
     1. Transformed
        1. μεταμορφόω metamorphóō,
           1. Matt. 17:2 - Jesus was transfigured
           2. Mark 9:2 - Jesus was transfigured
           3. Rom. 12:2 - transformed by the renewing of your mind
           4. 2 Cor. 3:18 - transformed into the image from glory to glory
     2. Renewing of your mind
        1. Christians
           1. Prov. 23:7, "For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you."
           2. Luke 24:45, "… He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures."
           3. Eph. 4:23, "and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,"
           4. Col. 3:2, "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."
        2. Unbelievers
           1. Unbelievers are given over to the depravity of their mind (Rom. 1:28; 2 Tim. 3:8)
           2. Unbelievers walk in the futility of their minds (Eph. 4:17)
           3. Unbelievers can be defiled in their minds (Titus 1:15)
           4. Phil. 3:18–19, "For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things."
           5. Note: I've encountered many people who are intellectually convinced of a particular position that is clearly not biblical. It is very difficult to change their minds. The heart can be deceived as well as the mind. The heart is fallen, as is the mind. The fallenness of the mind is called the noetic effect of sin.

Rom. 1:26–28, "For this reason, God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper."

* 1. So that you may prove what the will of God is
     1. The proof spoken of here is not that of logic and mathematics.
     2. Instead, it is a reasoned approach whereby we reveal the will of God, which is found in the Scriptures. Therefore, you need to study God's word your whole life:
     3. Because it is the Christian worldview that God exists and that the Bible is from God, and the proof offered is from God's word.
     4. The proof rests in God's nature, not in man's reasoning. God does not defend His own existence. He simply speaks the truth from His character.
     5. One of our callings as Christians is to learn the will of God, live the will of God, speak the will of God, and proclaim the will of God.
     6. Along with this, we can make spiritual judgments on spiritual issues and reveal the will of God to people regarding faith in Christ, turning from sin, and helping others to find Jesus.

# For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

* 1. Through the grace given to me
     1. Grace, χάρις cháris (156 occurrences in the N.T.), is the unmerited favor from God. It is something done to the benefit of somebody else without the expectation of return. The grace of God is His free expression of Love towards us based on what is in Him, not what is in us.
     2. However, some religious groups think of it as a substance or a power.
        1. Roman Catholicism: "The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1999)
        2. Eastern Orthodoxy: "The Grace of God is bestowed upon each Christian by the Word of God in the Person of Jesus Christ and His Church as well as through the sacred ceremonies, mysteria, and other divine services where the presence of every member of the church is important." (<https://www.goarch.org/-/the-fundamental-teachings-of-the-eastern-orthodox-church>)
  2. Not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think
     1. It is natural in our fallenness to exalt ourselves.
     2. We seek our own benefit. We like to judge truth by our own experience. We justify our motives and desires in contradiction to God's word.
     3. Paul warns us not to think too highly of ourselves. In order to do this, we must focus on the work of Christ on the cross. He was humble, though he had the right to exalt Himself.
        1. Phil. 2:3–9, "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name."
  3. Think so as to have sound judgment
     1. Our sound judgment is related to our humility.
     2. Humility is knowing our proper place before God.
     3. If we are prideful, we cannot make sound judgments because we will twist truth to suit our own needs.
  4. God has allotted to each a measure of faith
     1. Faith is used here as the connection between God's grace and ourselves.
        1. The word 'faith' πίστις pístis, occurs 243 times in the New Testament.
     2. Of course, God's grace is not dependent on our faith.
     3. But as Christians, our faith is vitally important before God.
     4. The context is believers. God has granted to each faith.
        1. Phil. 1:29, "For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake."
        2. John 6:29, "Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.'"

# For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function,

# so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

* 1. 'One body' is refers to the believers.
  2. We are the body of Christ, the fellowship of believers, the redeemed, the ones indwelt by God.
  3. Eph. 4:11–12, "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ."
  4. John 14:23, "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.'"

# Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith.

* 1. Gifts
     1. χάρισμα charisma, 17 occurrences in the New Testament
        1. Rom. 5:15, "the free gift is not like the transgression…"
        2. Rom. 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
        3. 1 Cor. 12:4, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit."
        4. 1 Cor. 12:28, "And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues."
        5. 1 Tim. 4:14, "Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery."
        6. 1 Pet. 4:10, "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."
     2. Some say that all the charismatic gifts have ceased with the apostles. They say that "when the perfect comes" refers to when the Bible is completed. So, that is when all the charismatic gifts stopped.
        1. 1 Cor. 13:8–12, "Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known."
        2. When the perfect comes
           1. 1 Cor. 1:7, "so that you are not lacking in any gift [charismati], awaiting eagerly the revelation [apokolupsin] of our Lord Jesus Christ."
        3. Face to face
           1. The phrase "face to face" means a personal encounter (Gen. 32:30; Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:8; Duet. 5:4; 34:10; Judges 6:22, and Jer. 32:4; 34:3; Ezekiel 20:35; Acts 25:16; 2 Cor. 10:1; 2 John 12; 3 John 14)
        4. Have been fully known
           1. God only knows believers (John 10:27; Gal. 4:8-9; Rom. 8:29). Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me" (John 10:14). Jesus does not know unbelievers (Matt. 7:22-23). In fact, the Bible never says that God 'knows' unbelievers.
     3. In my opinion, "the perfect" refers to the return of Jesus, and we are not to lose any charismatic gift while we wait for His return (1 Cor. 1:7).
  2. What charismatic gift do you have?
     1. Charismatic Gifts refer to the special spiritual gifts given to the church. They are to edify and build up the church. They are mentioned in Rom. 12, 1 Cor. 12, and 1 Cor. 14. Also, eternal life is considered a charismatic gift.
     2. Word of wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8), word of knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8), faith (1 Cor. 12:9; Rom. 12:3), healing (1 Cor. 12:9), miracles (1 Cor. 12:10), prophecy (1 Cor. 12:10; 1 Cor. 14:1, 5, 29-31; Rom. 12:6), distinguishing of spirits (1 Cor. 12:10), tongues (1 Cor. 12:10; 14:2, 13-14), interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:10), eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

# If service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching.

# or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

* 1. Paul lists six things in which we can exercise our gifts.
     1. Service - διακονία diakonía
        1. Dealing with the temporal affairs of the church.
     2. Teaching - διδάσκω didáskō
        1. Teachers are listed after the apostles, and are subservient to them.
     3. Exhortation - παρακαλέω parakaléō
        1. Exhortation follows teaching to recommend behavior and belief.
     4. Giving with liberality - μεταδίδωμι metadídōmi
        1. This is probably dealing with providing the church and others.
     5. Leading with diligence - προΐστημι proı̈́stēmi
        1. Leading in the church or one's household.
     6. Mercy with cheerfulness - ἐλεέω eleéō
        1. To cheerfully show kindness to others without begrudging.

# Let Love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

* 1. Love be without hypocrisy - ἀγάπη agape
     1. If we truly love from the heart, it will not be hypocritical. We love for the benefit of others, not for appearance, not for reciprocity.
  2. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good
     1. Abhorrence is an extreme revulsion. We are to hate what is evil.
     2. Interestingly, Paul says to cling to what is good. Perhaps we might have thought the contrast would require "love what is good."
     3. But in Greek, the word for 'cling' means to glue together. We are, so to speak, to glue ourselves to what is good.

# Be devoted to one another in brotherly Love; give preference to one another in honor;

# not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord;

# rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,

# contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

* 1. Devoted to one another in Brotherly Love
     1. φιλαδελφία philadelphía.
     2. It occurs eight times in five verses in the N.T. (Rom. 12:10; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Pet. 1:7)
  2. Give preference to one another
     1. Different translations
        1. KJV - in honor, preferring one another
        2. RSV - outdo one another in showing honor
        3. NIV - honor one another above yourselves
     2. Since Love is other-centered (John 3:16; 15:13), we know we love others when we are honoring them above ourselves.
  3. Not lagging behind in diligence
     1. We are not to be slow in our earnest effort and desire to do what is good
     2. Diligence is σπουδή spoudḗ. It means to speed, to hurry.
  4. Fervent in Spirit
     1. Is this a reference to the person's spirit or the Holy Spirit?
     2. It is a heartfelt "burning."
  5. Serving the Lord
     1. We serve God by serving others
     2. Eph. 6:7, "With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men."
     3. Col. 3:23, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men."
  6. Rejoicing in hope
     1. Our hope is in Christ and what He's accomplished. We rejoice in what God is doing in and through us.
  7. Persevering in tribulation
     1. This is a self-explanatory comment that is something we all need to remember. We always hope in what God can and will do in our circumstances.
  8. Devoted to prayer
     1. We do not want to work in our own wisdom and power. Therefore, we need to be devoted to prayer so that we might enter into God's will and accomplish it.
  9. Contributing to the needs of the saints
     1. We are to care for others in the faith, whether it be financially, emotionally, physically, prayerfully, etc. Remember, Jesus said,
        1. John 13:34, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."
  10. Practicing hospitality
      1. Hospitality in the Ancient Near East was a very serious undertaking. A single home could represent the entire community.
      2. In addition, in times of persecution, Christians would often house other Christians.

# Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

* 1. “εὐλογέω eulogéō; contracted eulogṓ, imperf. ēulógoun, fut. eulogḗsō, aor. ēulógēs, from eú (2095), good, well, and lógos (3056), word. To bless, speak well of. This word should be distinguished from makarízō (3106), to acknowledge or pronounce as blessed."[[6]](#footnote-6)
  2. This is not natural – to our fallen natures.
  3. We want justice for them (and mercy for ourselves). We want the law, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.
     1. Exodus 21:23–24, "But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."
  4. To bless is "other-centered." It is not natural to our anger and self-righteousness. But it is what we must do because that is what Jesus did.
  5. But there is a warning about our anger.
     1. Eph. 4:31, "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice."

# Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

* 1. We must empathize with both the good and the bad for others.
     1. This is one of the reasons that God lets us experience trials. It softens us and opens up our empathy, care, and actions towards others.
  2. We should not discriminate and only rejoice for people but not share in their tragedies.
     1. We face many tragedies in our lives and the lives of others. We sympathize and grieve with them, and they with us.

# Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

* 1. The same mind toward one another
     1. Paul urges us to have one common attitude.
     2. We are not to be arrogant and prideful.
     3. W are not to show prejudice.
     4. We are to associate with all kinds of people in.
        1. Prisons, hospitals, and neighbors, of all sorts.

# Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

* 1. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.
     1. Proverbs 20:22, "Do not say, 'I will repay evil'; Wait for the Lord, and He will save you."
     2. Matthew 5:39, "But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also."
        1. Isaiah 1:17, "Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow."
        2. Psalm 82:3, "Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute."
  2. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.
     1. This does not mean we should respect their views of what is right, especially in the morally confused world of transsexualism, homosexuality, abortion, racism, communism, socialism, etc.
     2. But Paul is telling us to be respectful to all people.
        1. We are made in the image of God. Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness…'"
     3. But what is right can only be determined by what God reveals to us that is consistent with His good and holy character, revealed in the word of God.

# If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

* 1. Paul is urging us to be at peace with everyone if possible. But of course, Scripture tells us also to resist evil.
     1. Eph. 6:13, "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm."
     2. James 4:7, "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."
     3. Psalm 34:14, "Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it."
  2. Do Christians have the right to physical self-defense?
     1. In light of possible violence, Jesus told his disciples to buy a sword (Luke 22:36). He even used a scourge to drive people out of the temple (John 2:15).
     2. Physical self-defense is permitted, but it is not an obligation (Exodus 22:2; Luke 11:21; 22:36).
     3. We have the right and obligation to defend others (Psalm 82:4; Prov. 24:11; Luke 22:36).
     4. We can flee to avoid persecution (Matt. 10:23; 24:15-16; John 10:39; 2 Cor. 11:32-33).
     5. We are to pray for our persecutors (Matt. 5:44).
     6. We are to love our enemies (Luke 6:27, 35).

# Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

* 1. Never take your own revenge.
     1. Blood revenge was a problem in the Ancient Near East (ANE). It often led to an escalation of violence where physical injury was returned for physical injury. It often escalated into increased violence.
  2. Leave room for the wrath of God
     1. "Vengence is mine" is from Deut. 32:35
     2. We are to be at peace with people, pray for persecutors, bless them, and leave room for God to deal righteously with people.
     3. Yet, there are the imprecatory Psalms.
        1. A list of the imprecatory Psalms are 5, 17, 28, 35, 40, 55, 59, 70, 71, 79, 80, 94, 129, 137, 139, 140.
        2. Psalm 40:14, "Let those be ashamed and humiliated together who seek my life to destroy it. Let those be turned back and dishonored who delight in my hurt."
        3. Psalm 94:1-2, "O LORD, God of vengeance, God of vengeance, shine forth! 2 Rise up, O Judge of the earth, render recompense to the proud."

# "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

* 1. This is a continuation of the admonition to bless those who persecute us (v. 14).
  2. This is not natural to us, but it is natural to God.
  3. Therefore, we are to emulate Him.
  4. Luke 23:34, "But Jesus was saying, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves."
  5. Burning coals on his head,
     1. Is this meant to aggravate the unbelievers by exposing their own sin?
     2. Or is it meant to illustrate further kindness? In ANE culture, when a neighbor's fire went out, coals were often borrowed to produce fire in another person's home. To transport the coals, they were wrapped in fireproof material, i.e., pot and cloth, and placed on the head for transport - as was customary at that time.

# Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

* 1. This simple and profound statement of truth is something we should all memorize.
  2. That which is good is revealed in Scripture and exemplified in Christ.
  3. We are to be as peaceful as possible and resist evil, but we are also commanded to do good to others - even when they are wicked to us.
  4. The balance of doing good, seeking justice, defending ourselves, protesting, and participating in righteous condemnation takes a lot of practice, foresight, and inner reflection guided by prayer and the word of God.

1. Zodhiates, Spiros. 2000. In *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. 2000. In *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Zodhiates, Spiros. 2000. In *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)